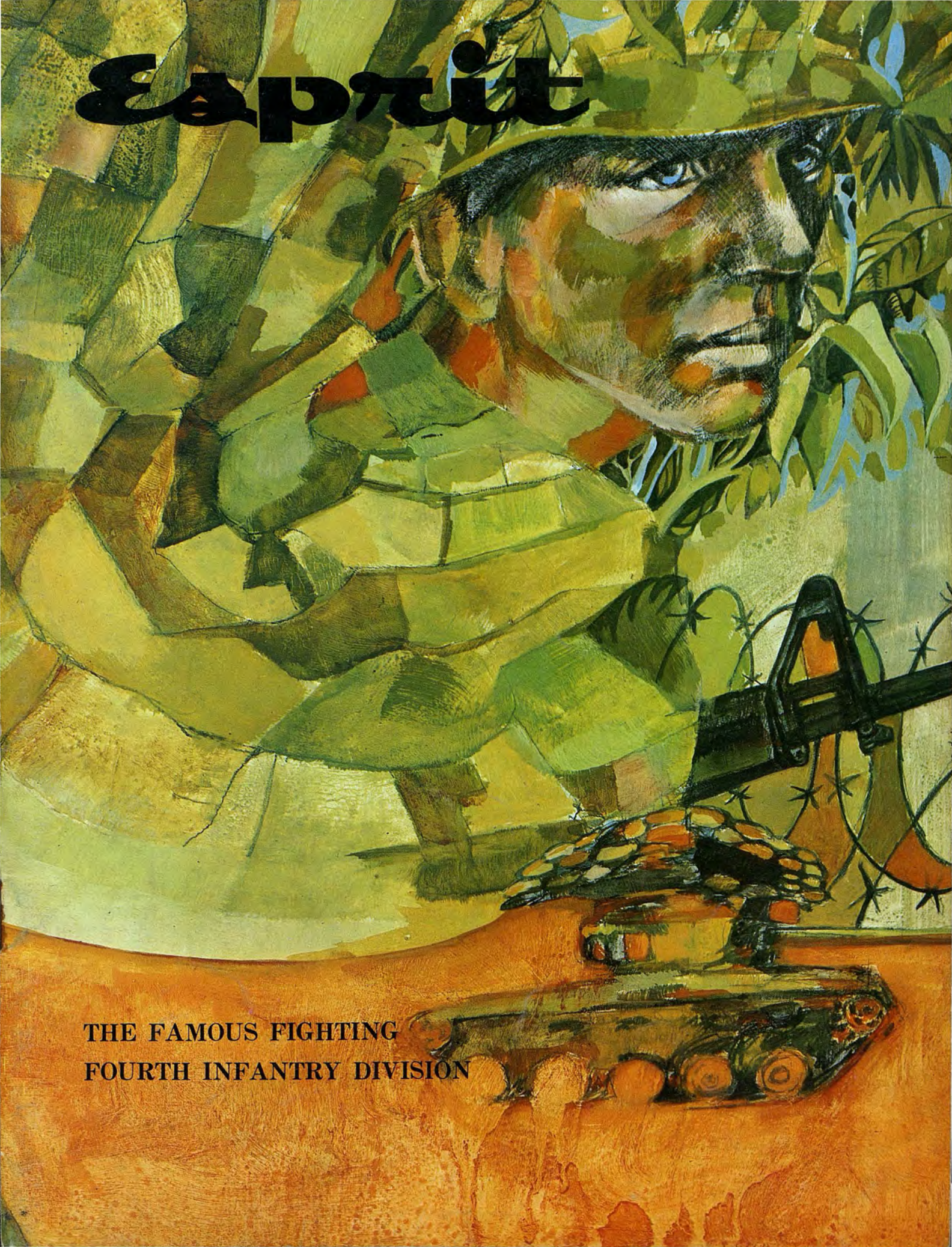
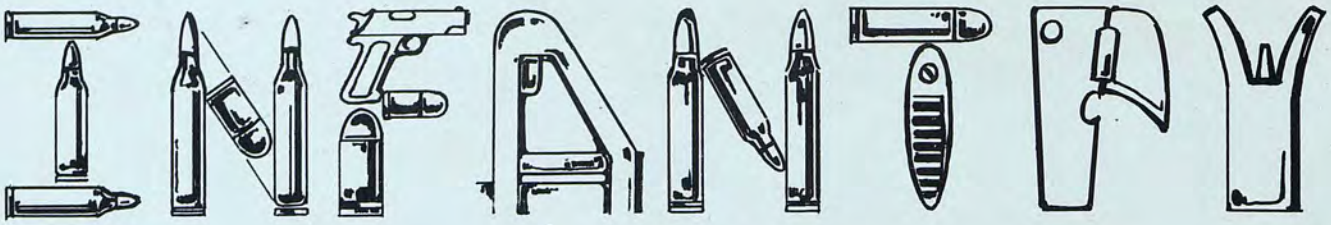

Esprit
THE FAMOUS FIGHTING
FOURTH INFANTRY DIVISION



"Infantry!"
The word triggers thoughts of masculinity, strength and sweat, courage and heroism. That's how it is here in the Highlands. That's why this magazine is dedicated to you, the "Infantrymen."

Not long ago you were enduring classrooms, probably not applying yourself as much as you could have. The future was uncertain and so were you.
Then you enlisted, or maybe you were drafted. What did it matter? You were in and you'd better make the most of it, you rationalized. Basic, AIT. Tough as they were, they weren't anything like what was waiting for you "over there," you were told. But you strained muscles you didn't even know you had and you got in shape. You had to.
Who was the first one to tell you that you were on the levy to Vietnam? The CO? First Sergeant? PSNCO at battalion? Or the company clerk who had a buddy up there at "Headquarters?" Hardly mattered how you heard; you were going off to fight Charlie in the paddies.

Your family probably shared your lack of enthusiasm at the time. Mom cried at the airport, and Dad just shook your hand a little more firmly than he had ever done before. The folks were proud, to be sure—remember the expression on your kid brother's face?—but they were scared. They tried not to show it, but you knew. 'Cause you were scared too.
But grown men don't cry. Not very often, that is.
"It's gonna be a long year," you predicted.
And now you know what "long" really means.

You probably processed through Lewis before you boarded the big bird for 'Nam. Maybe you arrived at Cam Rahn, maybe Bien Hoa. Regardless, your tour began.
Processing was miserable, you remember.
Line after line in sweltering tropical heat. New fatigues, boots, malaria pills, a walletful of cards to carry with you all the time, a ration card with the booze portion marked out. New sights. New sounds. New smells. Man, how does a guy make it?
But the inevitable countdown finally began. "How many *you* got buddy? 362? 350?"
"Lord! If *I* had that many. . ."
And before long you were saying it yourself to some unfortunate new guy who wasn't quite as short.

You were finally assigned to some line outfit after a few days of orientation training at the replacement detachment in the base camp.
ELEVEN BRAVO.
Grunt!
Crunchie!
Infantry!
New words jumped into your vocabulary. You learned 'em so you could communicate with the veterans. Words like Birds, Slicks, Snakes, LOHs, Rucks, FOs, 'Yards, CAs, Rangers, SRPs, LPs, CPs, and dozens more—some you knew you wouldn't be taking home. Cathy would never understand how it is out here.

But you know. You know how hot a day is, how high a hill is, how long a night is. The words are important, a way of life. Who's who and what's what and where. How you move, how you fight, who you fight.

Who you fight.

Charlie. Sir Charles. Chuck. VC. NVA. No matter what you call him, he's the enemy. And he's good—damn good. You learn quickly to respect him, to take for granted he's out there, and to never take for granted you'll see tomorrow. You learn his ways, his habits, what he looks like and smells like. You learn to hate him though you don't even know him. You learn that killing is easy when it's you or him.

And you kill time, too.
Day, night, one less. Hump, dig, sleep, shoot, think.
What do you think about? Mostly your folks, your girl, or your wife and kids—and you count days—hours, even—till you get back to them in THE WORLD.

continued on inside back cover

FOURTH INFANTRY DIVISION

Esprit

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 1

Fall 1969

ESPRIT is an authorized publication of the 4th Infantry Division, APO SF 96262, and is published quarterly by the Division's Information Office. Opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army. Unless otherwise indicated, all material published in ESPRIT may be reprinted provided credit is given the magazine, author and photographer or artist.

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ESPRIT is an annual publication produced in four increments so that the four installments, if retained will provide each individual with a permanent record of his tour with the Fourth Infantry Division.

The men of the Famous Fighting Fourth Division's Second Brigade who boarded the troop ship USS General John Pope *at Fort Lewis in July of 1966 did not know what Vietnam held in store for them. They knew, however, that they had joined the ranks of former Ivymen who had fought at Aisne-Marne, St. Mihiel, and Meuse-Argonne during World War I, and at Utah Beach and the Heurtgen Forest during World War II. Amid the waves and shouts of* bon voyage, *the men who left from Fort Lewis' Pier 1 in 1966 found themselves bound in an* esprit *that would surge throughout all three brigades of the division once they were reunited in Vietnam. The same* esprit *would carry them and others after them through the battles at Plei Djereng, the Ia Drang Valley, Dak To, Duc Lap, the two Tet Offensives and Chu Pa. And that same* esprit *would inspire the troops of the division during present and future days in Vietnam. Theirs —our—is a pround and distinguished tradition to uphold.*

The Editor

THREE YEARS: AN EPIC OF ESPRIT

Phoenix, Sun., July 31, 1966 The Arizona Republic A-5

AP Wirephoto

GOODBY, MY LOVE—A private first class from the 4th Infantry at Ft. Lewis, Wash., reaches through a cyclone fence for one last kiss from his wife as he prepares to board the troop ship Gen. Walker. The Army has made no announcement of the destination of the troops aboard the ship.

The Famous Fighting Fourth Infantry Division began its Vietnam operations with the landing of the Second Brigade at Qui Nhon on August 10, 1966. Almost immediately the brigade was airlifted to the newly selected site of the division base camp at the foot of Dragon Mountain, six miles south of Pleiku City. The Dragon Mountain site, considered by neighboring Jarai tribesmen to be the sacred center of the universe, was strategically located within easy striking distance of the principal North Vietnamese supply and troop infiltration routes into the Central Highlands.

By October the two remaining brigades, the First and the Third, had landed in Vietnam. Shortly after landing in scenic Nha Trang, the First Brigade was deployed to Tuy Hoa and placed under the operational control of the First Field Force, Vietnam (IFFV), where the brigade troops would partake in OPERATION ADAMS. The First Brigade's initial mission of protecting valuable rice harvests along the coast of the South China Sea and destroying small Viet Cong units assigned to the 95th Local Force and 30th Main Force battalions was extremely successful. Before redeploying to the highlands near Pleiku to rejoin the Second Brigade in early 1967, the First Brigade was credited with killing 493 Viet Cong, detaining 153 others, and clearing a swath of Highway 1, thus terminating a major Viet Cong threat in Phu Yen Province.

The division's Third Brigade came ashore at Vung Tau and was assigned an area of operations in the marshlands northwest of Saigon, some two hundred miles south of its sister brigades. Since the Third Brigade of the 25th Infantry Division was already operating in the Central Highlands, the Third Brigade of the Fourth Division was placed under the operational control of the "Tropic Lightning." The dislocation of the two brigades from their parent divisions came about as a result of the phased deployment of Army forces to Vietnam and was influenced by the tactical situation at the time. It wasn't until August of 1967 at a colorful ceremony at Duc Pho that a formal transfer of colors took place between the third brigades of the Fourth and 25th Divisions. The change was initiated to alleviate administrative problems and enhance unit as well as geographical integrity. The change brought the following units to the Fourth Division: 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry; 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry; 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry; 2nd Battalion, 9th Artillery; and 1st Battalion, 69th Armor.

In mid-October of 1966, division operations intensified throughout Kontum Province. The Second and Third Brigades teamed up and initiated OPERATION PAUL REVERE IV, aimed at destroying the 32nd, 33rd, 88th and 95B Regiments known to be concentrated west of the Se San River. When the vicious and heavy fighting ended in late December, the two brigades were credited with a total of 878 NVA dead and 78 detained. Year-end intelligence reports indicated that the NVA remnants of the battle were retreating to the northwest.

It was also during OPERATION PAUL REVERE IV that ILT Mark N. Enari, a platoon leader with Company A, 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry, was killed in action while providing covering automatic weapons fire as wounded members of his platoon were being pulled back to positions of relative safety. LT Enari was the first Fourth Division soldier to earn the Silver Star posthumously. Five months after his death, Dragon Mountain Base Camp was renamed Camp Enari in tribute to the young lieutenant from Estonia who, in December, 1966, gave his life for his comrades.

With the turn of the year the Second Brigade kicked off OPERATION SAM HOUSTON (initially named OPERATION PAUL REVERE V) in an effort to reduce enemy infiltration of supplies and troops into the Highlands. The brigade postured itself in a screening position at the Cambodian border between the Se San River and the Chu Pong Mountains. While fighting the enemy, the division simultaneously established a civic action program to help its Vietnamese and Montagnard neighbors. Mainly a self-help program, Civic Action was designed to improve the living conditions of people in the Central Highlands. Villages such as Plei Beng were visited almost daily by the Second Brigade's civic action teams. There were also several training programs set up within the villages to teach the Montagnards the fundamentals of first aid, construction, and agricultural techniques.

Toward the end of February, four American infantry battalions were deployed west of Plei Djereng across the Se San and Nam Sathay Rivers. A month of heavy fighting against the 32nd, 66th, 88th and 95B NVA regiments followed. During this period the most prevalent enemy tactic employed was the attack by indirect fire. Well over 1000 mortar rounds were fired in 29 separate attacks on battalion fire bases and company positions. Ground contact was avoided by the enemy, yet when the four NVA regiments withdrew in late March they left over 700 of their dead behind.

Anticipating increased infiltration during the approaching monsoon season, the First and Second Brigades were shifted south and east into the Ia Drang Valley and Highway 19W areas beginning in April, 1967. It was the kick-off of OPERATION FRANCIS MARION (April 6-October 11) which destroyed the enemy's hopes of mounting a major monsoon offensive in 1967.

Covering the same area as OPERATION SAM HOUSTON, OPERATION FRANCIS MARION began with a series of light and scattered contacts. These were followed by a period known in the annals

May 26, 1967

Ivymen, Enemy Battalions Clash In Pleiku Province

of the Famous Fighting Fourth Division as "The Nine Days in May"- days which saw the heaviest and bloodiest battles of the entire operation. Soldiers of the 32nd and 66th NVA Regiments were beaten so badly that they were forced to avoid contact during the closing weeks of the operation. More than 1200 enemy were killed, over 100 were detained, and a huge amount of weapons and equipment was captured.

Although "The Nine Days in May" began on May 18th, the first indications of enemy presence in the infamous Chu Coungot Mountains came on May 1 when the 3rd Battalion, 12th Infantry engaged an NVA battalion in the area, killing 119. Then, beginning May 18, each of the three battalions of the First Brigade engaged in hard fighting in the rugged hills when they met two NVA regiments head on. The NVA had poured into the mountains from the west. Fighting was bitter and often hand-to-hand during the nine-day period.

The action started when a platoon of Company B, 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry was cut off by NVA regulars and had to request artillery fire close to their own positions. Not found until the next morning, the platoon accounted for 38 enemy bodies. On the following day, May 19, the same battalion had all three of its companies grouped in a single perimeter for the night when the enemy tried to overrun the position. The battalion threw back the NVA, who had to resort to rockets, mortars and small arms fire throughout the night.

The 3rd Battalion, 12th Infantry was next to have a crack at the freshly equipped and newly trained NVA. The "Braves" kicked the enemy out of two grid squares before the NVA decided they had enough and broke contact. Finally, the 3rd Battalion, 8th Infantry found the NVA waiting for them several thousand meters from where the 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry had engaged them six days before. After a three-hour battle against the bare-chested NVA, contact was broken and the enemy ran, leaving behind 96 of their dead comrades.

Meanwhile, in the field of civic action during OPERATION FRANCIS MARION, the Edap Enang Montagnard resettlement program began. The massive program was initiated to cut off the source of forced supply and labor for NVA forces in the area, to provide security and various benefits to the resettled Montagnards, and to provide the Allied Forces operating west of Pleiku with free fire zones. By October, with the project well underway, a city second in size only to Pleiku was being created. Then, with the Montagnards happily resettled in their new homes and the dry season approaching, a new Civic Action program designed to improve their standard of living went into full swing. Also, around Camp Enari the division expanded its "Good Neighbor Program" to encompass some 15,000 Montagnards in 60 hamlets within the 10 kilometer radius of the base camp.

In mid-July of 1967 the division's Third Brigade, following a series of brief redeployments, established its forward base camp at the Oasis. Aside from two heavy contacts south of Duc Co, the enemy once again decided to avoid ground contact. Jackson Hole, the site of the First Brigade's headquarters, was subjected to a 122 mm rocket attack on August 23, however; the date marked the NVA's first use of heavy rockets against Fourth Division troops.

The most sustained operation launched by the Fourth Division since its arrival in country has been OPERATION MACARTHUR. Begun in mid-October of 1967, OPERATION MACARTHUR materialized when it appeared that the enemy forces operating throughout Pleiku, Kontum and Darlac Provinces were attempting to contain American Forces in place while the 32nd and 66th Regiments, along with the 1st NVA Division, made their move to close in on the mountainous jungles south and southwest of Dak To.

Having foreseen the enemy's plan, the division had begun a series of maneuvers to counter those of the enemy. The First Brigade was shifted to Dak To, while the Second Brigade with only two battalions remained in Darlac Province. Soon it was learned that the enemy's main effort was to be concentrated in Kontum Province against US-ARVN installations in the vicinity of Dak To and Ben Het. The enemy commander had at his disposal four infantry regiments, three of which he positioned north and south of Dak To. The fourth he left in reserve on the Laotian side of the border. To counter the enemy threat, the 1st Brigade was deployed southeast of Dak To with two of its organic battalions. An additional battalion of the 173rd Airborne Brigade was placed under its operational control. The offensive against the well-entrenched NVA forces was on.

The Battle of Dak To was fought in two parts. The first part was fought during November 3–12 as the 3rd Battalion, 12th Infantry captured Hill 724 and other divisional units, including the 3rd Battalion, 12th Infantry, had significant contacts. General William C. Westmoreland visited the battle area during this period and, based on intelligence reports, committed two more brigades for the Battle of Dak To.

The second and bloodiest stage of the battle lasted for the next 13 days as the 3rd Battalion, 12th Infantry captured Hill 1338 and the 173rd Airborne Brigade took possession of Hill 875. The NVA could have melted into the dense, impenetrable jungle according to military

December 10, 1967 IVY LEAF

Battle Of Dak To Stops Major NVA Effort

men in the area, but instead they chose to fight. The conquering of the hills surrounding Dak To was more than a process of heavy fighting, however. Possession of the hills was made with the methodical destruction of bunkered hilltops resulting from endless air strikes and artillery barrages.

The Battle for Dak To ended as swiftly as it began. Enemy activity seemed to die overnight once Hill 875 was captured. And when Hill 875 was taken, General Westmoreland commented from Washington that the Battle of Dak To was "the beginning of a great defeat for the enemy." Lieutenant General William R. Peers, Fourth Division Commander at the time, stated that no one would ever know for sure how many NVA had been killed.

Veterans of the Battle of Dak To will readily admit that the NVA soldiers fought viciously and fanatically to hold their strategic positions in the hills ringing Dak To. They were no match, however, for the superior US Forces which were assisted by devastating air strikes and

BY GEN. WESTMORELAND March 31, 1967

Battle Called 'Major Victory Of War'

a constant barrage of artillery. Enemy bunkers were hammered by 38 consecutive B52 strikes. By actual body count, 1644 NVA soldiers fell at the Battle of Dak To. To include those enemy dead who were dragged away by their comrades and those who died of wounds later would probably double the figure of enemy losses, according to various enemy sources.

The Battle of Dak To is now considered to have been one of the major battles of the Vietnam war; indeed, it has been the most significant battle fought in the Central Highlands. And to those soldiers of the division who fought at Dak To, to those who boldy inched their way up Hills 1338 and 724, it was a battle won by blood and determination and *esprit*—a battle never to be forgotten.

During the Tet Offensive of 1968, the Famous Fighting Fourth once again locked itself in combat with NVA regulars. This series of vicious battles in which over 3000 enemy soldiers were killed established yet a higher supremecy for the Fourth Division in the Central Highlands. In early January, 1968, intelligence reports and captured enemy documents told of possible coordinated attacks on major cities in the Highlands during the ensuing 1968 Tet truce. Numerous Viet Cong units infiltrated the cities of Pleiku, Kontum, and Ban Me Thuot to reinforce the NVA units which planned the offensive; other enemy units initiated their support with attacks by indirect fire followed by major multi-battalion attacks.

In the early morning hours of January 30, Highland cities erupted into battle. Fighting raged from door to door in Kontum, Pleiku and Ban Me Thuot. With the help of ARVN Rangers and the 3rd ARVN Cavalry, the Fourth Division's 1st Battalion, 69th Armor and the 4th Engineer Battalion met the enemy in the streets of Pleiku, driving them from one end of the city to the other, killing 632 and detaining 182. While fighting raged in Pleiku, the 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry, the 7th

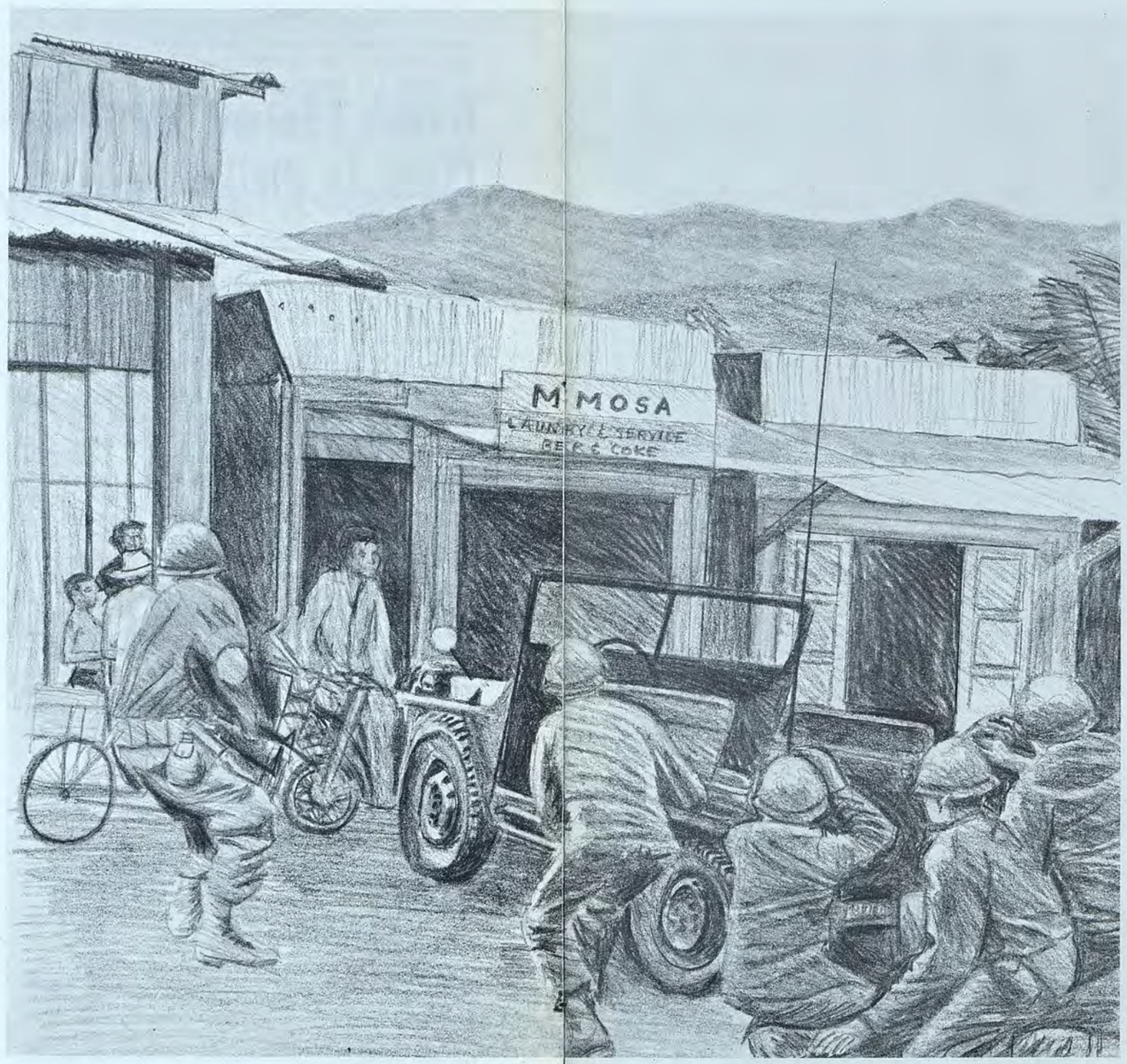
February 18, 1968

HIGHLAND TOWNS ERUPT IN BATTLE

Squadron, 17th Cavalry (Airmobile), along with elements of the 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry and the 2nd Squadron, 1st Cavalry, teamed during four days of hard fighting to kill more than 1000 enemy troops and shatter the NVA's hopes of capturing Kontum City.

Veteran US soldiers were comparing the battle in the streets of Kontum with some of the famous urban battles fought in Korea and World War II. The enemy struck at three points in the city—north just above the airfield and to the west and east of Highway 511, which cuts the city in half. The city itself was defended by two ARVN battalions plus a small force of American advisors when the initial fighting broke out.

Some of the bloodiest fighting occured at the downtown market square during the first day of contact. There had been an NVA stronghold established and after unsuccessful attempts to take the market place, air strikes and helicopter firing throughout the night leveled the



Artwork by SP4 Ted Phillips

area. Many enemy defenders died trapped in the rubble while others were found lying in the surrounding streets. Intense fighting also broke out at the airfield, which an NVA company almost overran. Owing to the aid of gunships and the sheer determination of the defenders, however, the enemy was finally beaten back. Fourth Division troops were inserted, and after days of heated fighting, more than 900 bodies were found in and around Kontum City

Too, the same fate plagued enemy forces in Ban Me Thuot, where the number of enemy dead soared beyond the 900 mark.

With their objective ruined during the 1968 Tet Offensive, the NVA undertook another major buildup west of Polei Kleng and Kontum, and in the Dak To-Ben Het areas of the Central Highlands. They also intensified their road construction activities in the heavily-canopied jungles of the Plei Trap Valley to help speed up infiltration of troops and supplies.

Concentrating large-force attacks on various U.S. installations and fire bases, the NVA once again failed to realize their objectives. In turn, they merely piled up their own casualties. On April 24, 1968, enemy soldiers from the 66th NVA Regiment began a four-day attack against a fire base occupied by the 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry. Repulsed by superior firepower, they left 77 of their dead strewn about the battlefield. Full scale ground attacks by the NVA became the rule rather than the exception. In late May, for example, elements of the 101 D NVA Regiment launched a two-day attack against the 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry atop Fire Support Base 29. A determined counter-attack by the "Bullets" threw enemy soldiers off the fire base. One hundred twenty-nine NVA were killed in the struggle.

During mid-Summer of 1968 the rapid move of the Second Brigade to reinforce Ban Me Thuot upset the carefully laid plans of the NVA for a three-regiment attack on the city. With two American battalions screening the city to the west and south, the NVA regiments instead decided to shun direct confrontation with Allied Forces. They swung westward to Duc Lap, near the Cambodian border, and on the night of August 23 they waged a full-scale ground attack against the Duc Lap Special Forces Camp. The bitter fighting continued for three days as the NVA refused to succumb to the heavy artillery fire and air strikes. Over 500 NVA were killed in the vicinity of the camp, a total testifying both to the enemy's desire to gain a clear-cut victory and the seriousness of his defeat.

During September and October of 1968 aggressive

January 12, 1969

NVA DIE IN VC VALLEY

units of the Famous Fighting Fourth forestalled numerous threats against friendly locations throughout the Highlands. Mainline NVA units then seemed to withdraw from Vietnam into their border sanctuaries. When the lull in enemy activity followed, it was decided that the Fourth Division units would launch an operation in one of the enemy's traditional strongholds—the Dak Payou Valley. South of the historic Mang Yang Pass, where in 1954 the French Army had suffered extremely heavy casualties, the Dak Payou had long been used as a combination base area and supply depot for enemy troops.

In late December of last year the division's TASK FORCE WINNER was initiated to invade this sanctuary which has come to be called "VC Valley." Enemy troops were surprised to learn the sanctuary was being penetrated. So surprised, in fact, that they fled without much of a fight. Fourth Division troops meanwhile captured tons of foodstuffs, weapons, ammo, and miscellaneous equipment. TASK FORCE WINNER was all that its title implied, for the operation had undoubtedly struck a crippling blow to the local Viet Cong infrastructure and supply system in Pleiku Province.

Januray, 1969 saw elements of the Third Brigade combine with ARVN soldiers from the 24th Special Tactical Zone to begin operations in the Chu Pa Mountain region northwest of Pleiku City. While ARVN rangers and infantry blocked west of Chu Pa and one US battalion blocked to the south, another US battalion combat assaulted onto the mountain and attempted to drive the enemy forces from their strongholds and trap them against the blocking force. Sweeping north across the Chu Pa, the battalion met heavy resistance from enemy forces in cave complexes. Weeks were spent cleaning out the enemy infested area 21 miles northwest of Pleiku City. As a result, the enemy was prevented from probing effectively the more populated areas to the east of Chu Pa.

The NVA launched its 1969 Post-Tet Offensive on February 23, with attacks by indirect fire against Kontum, Pleiku, and numerous US fire support bases. Throughout the wide-ranging area of operations, division troops dealt the enemy forces several demolishing blows during the first week of March. The Ben Het CIDG camp, which had been shelled almost twice

TANK CREWS STOP ENEMY

THE STEADFAST AND LOYAL
FAMOUS FIGHTING FOURTH
Vol. 3, No. 12 CAMP ENARI, VIETNAM March 23, 1969

NVA Tracks Meet Sudden Destruction

By SP5 Peter Call

HIGHLANDER HEIGHTS—Three tank crews from Company B, 1st Battalion, 69th Armor stationed on the west hill of the Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG) camp at Ben Het had been listening to the vehicles below for 30 minutes.

The clanking of tracks and the growl of heavy engines made Staff Sergeant Jerry Jones of Pineville, Ky., uneasy.

"It took me a little while to remember where I heard those sounds before," the tank commander said, "and then daily since February 23, received over 300 rounds of incoming 85 mm artillery fire on March 3–4. When the enemy lifted its prep fires an estimated enemy battalion attempted to infiltrate the wire on the western perimeter shortly after midnight, March 4. Simultaneously, friendly aircraft reported ten enemy tanks and six trucks closing on the camp.

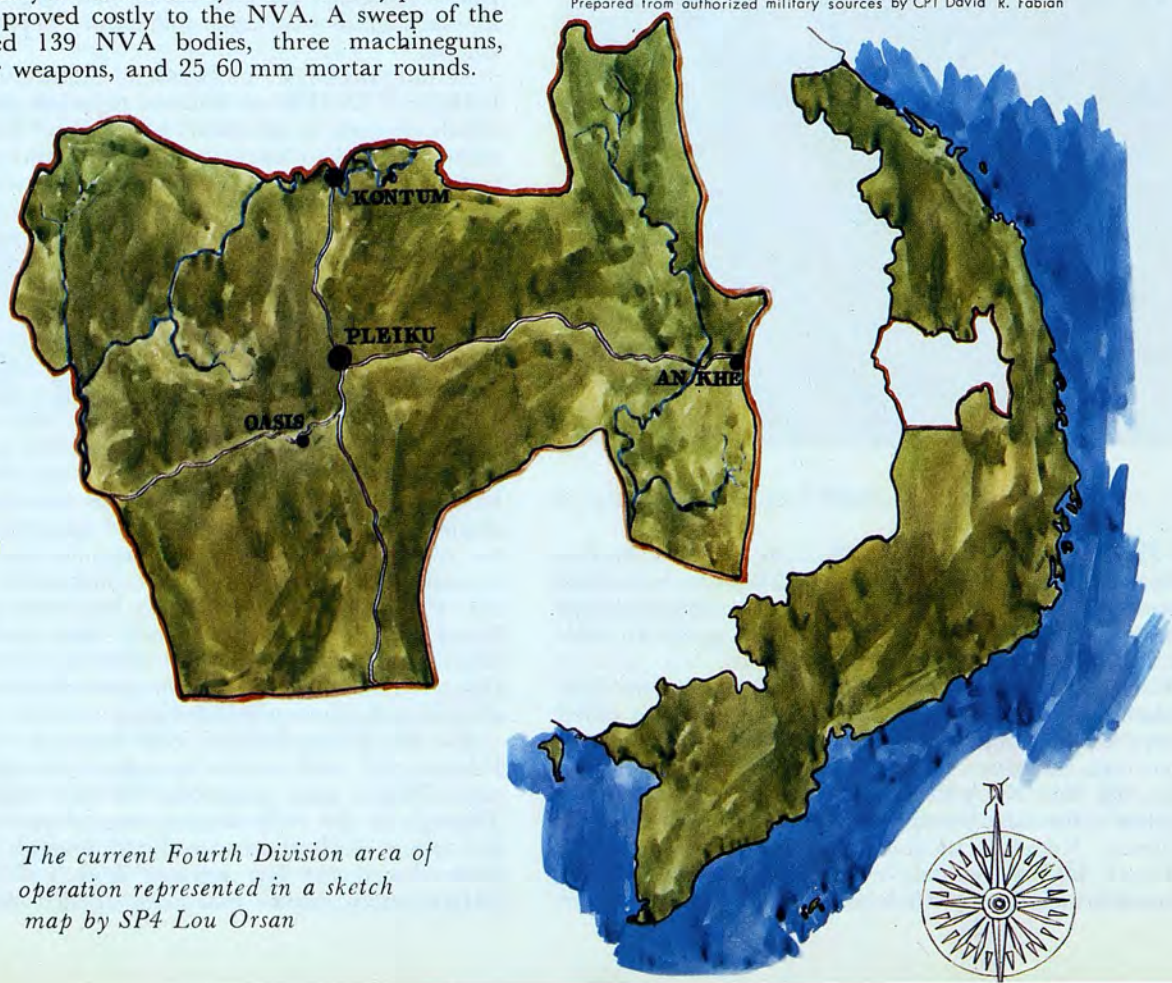
The Fourth Division's Company C, 1st Battalion, 69th Armor levelled its main tank guns and throttled the enemy threat by destroying the lead tank. Air Force fighters were credited with knocking out a second tank during the attack. Both vehicles were identified as Soviet PT76 amphibious tanks and were the first captured by an American unit in Vietnam.

Late that same week three companies of the 3rd Battalion, 8th Infantry reported heavy contact in an area 30 kilometers west of Polei Kleng. The enemy fiercely defended what was suspected to be a major staging area along the fringe of the Plei Trap Valley infiltration route. The battle raged over a two-day period as US Forces directed deadly air and artillery fire on enemy positions. The battle proved costly to the NVA. A sweep of the area yielded 139 NVA bodies, three machineguns, 24 shoulder weapons, and 25 60 mm mortar rounds.

In May of 1969 the Famous Fighting Fourth Infantry Division entered into a period during which emphasis turned to another phase of the war. Major General Donn R. Pepke announced the new threefold mission of the division: the division would continue its struggle against main force enemy units, would give greater attention to pacification programs, and would increase support to the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces.

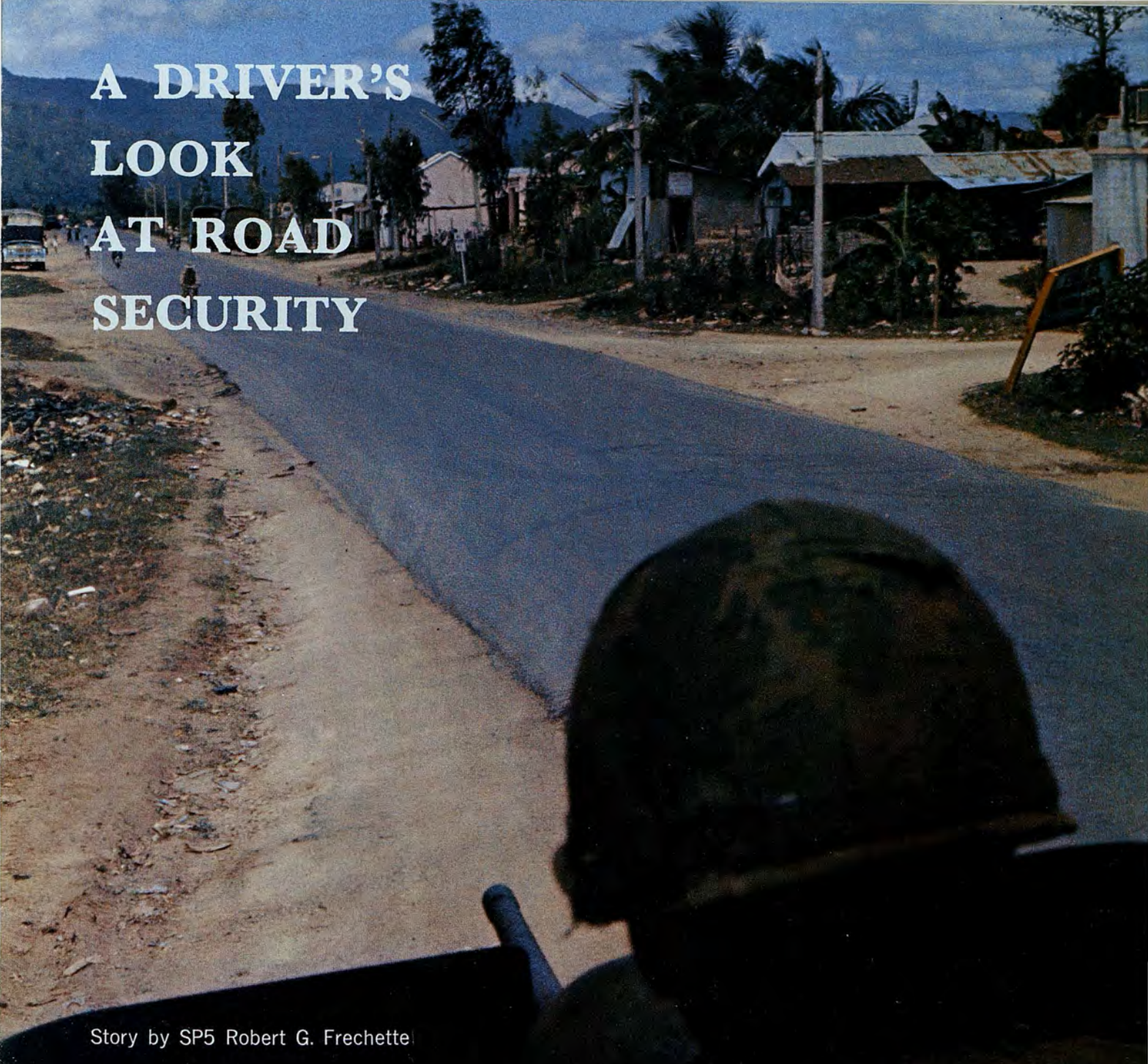
Our mission now is to strengthen the will and ability of the people of the Central Highlands to resist the enemy. The task assigned will be completed, to be sure. And it will be completed in the same magnificent spirit, the same *esprit*, that the Famous Fighting Fourth Infantry Division has undertaken every other task during the past three years in Vietnam.

Prepared from authorized military sources by CPT David R. Fabian



The current Fourth Division area of operation represented in a sketch map by SP4 Lou Orsan

A DRIVER'S LOOK AT ROAD SECURITY



Story by SP5 Robert G. Frechette

Specialist Four Will Slattery of Denver, Colo., climbed wearily into his five-ton truck as the early morning sun began to peek over the distant mountain range. "I could drive this highway in my sleep," he thought, switching on the portable radio resting on the seat. Goooood Morning, Vietnam," the disk jockey greeted.

The young convoy driver adjusted his flak jacket to a more comfortable position and laid his steel pot on the seat next to the radio. An M16 rifle stood in a corner of the truck's cab, a full bandolier of ammunition hanging beside it.

Today's cargo consisted of artillery rounds for Fourth Infantry Division redlegs at Camp Enari. It would be a long drive to Pleiku . . . five hours one way and another five on the return trip to the massive supply depot at Qui Nhon.

Specialist Slattery cranked up the side window of his truck. It creaked slowly upward. He left a two inch crack at the top in anticipation of the ensuing 80 to 90 degree heat.

At the signal to wind 'em up, the engine sputtered to life and the convoy began to move out. . . each vehicle maintaining a defensive interval. Machinegun carrying, metalsided deuce and a halfs and jeeps were spaced throughout the rolling troop.

Specialist Slattery wondered if this would be an eventful trip. He had been driving this stretch of Highway 19 every day for the past eight months with the exception of a few days off for an R & R in Hawaii with his wife. And during his brief absence the convoy was attacked by enemy mortar and rocket fire as it neared the infamous Mang Yang Pass, about midway between Qui Nhon and Pleiku. This was hardly the time to worry of such things, however. A tedious, grinding job had to be done and it would require concentration on the business at hand.

As the convoy ground out mile after mile, it neared An Khe Pass—one of the most beautiful areas

Photography: 1LT Robert Janosko

Slattery reflected, that he had seen since coming to Vietnam. The highway wove through the miles of picturesque mountains and often provided a breathtaking view—the kind that would be featured on a post card if this were a country at peace. The area was secured by the Republic of Korea Army (ROK), supported by American air and artillery. "What a great place for an ambush," he thought. But the ROKs did their job well; the road was safe.

After slackening speed for the trip through the city of An Khe, the convoy headed for the next probable point of danger along the route: the Mang Yang Pass. Almost everyone traveling the Central Highlands had heard how years ago the Viet Minh had ambushed the heart of the French force at that historic pass.

As Slattery continued to shepherd his heavy vehicle along Highway 19, the presence of the highway and bridge security elements of the Famous Fighting Fourth Infantry Division was evident. Tanks of the 1st Battalion, 69th Armor stood in readiness along the route as if daring "Charlie" to make a move against the highway.

Slattery recalled that up until four months ago, the stretch of highway east of the Mang Yang had been referred to as "Blackhawk Country," an area patrolled by the 2nd Squadron, 1st Cavalry. The Blackhawks had since redeployed, and now the armored vehicles of the 2nd Battalion (Mechanized), 8th Infantry were standing watch over the strategic supply route. And several Fourth Division fire bases, set off the highway, were occasionally evidenced.

Janosko

Approaching the spot where the convoy had been attacked while he had been in Hawaii, Slattery recalled the story of the incident told to him by Specialist Five Bob Grossberg of Chicago. It was still very fresh in his mind. . . .

"You know, we travel Highway 19 so often and never encounter trouble. After a while we get to the point where we are inclined to wonder why those tanks, Armored Personnel Carriers (APCs) and bridge guards are wasting their time. It seems that the area is safe and they aren't needed.

"Well, that's what 'Charlie' wants us to begin thinking. . . to catch us with our pants down. . . off guard so to speak. I'll never forget the job those road security people from the armor and mech units did for our convoy the day we got hit!

"To us, it was just another routine trip. As we got close to the Mang Yang Pass, all hell broke loose. 'Charlie' hit us with mortars and rockets and even some small arms fire. We were lucky that none of us got hurt. I would have hated to see what would have happened if those people hadn't been there to help us out.

"Ten khaki-clad NVA waited in the bamboo covered jungle area a good distance from the road. When the convoy neared, the NVA leader signaled his men to ready their firepower, and as the trucks began to roll toward their positions, the NVA rained their arsenal upon them.

"Light Observation Helicopter (LOH) Aero Scouts and Cobra

Gun truck adds the firepower

Janosko

A secured road keeps the convoys rolling

Janosko

gunships from Delta Troop, 2nd Squadron, 1st Cavalry had been patrolling the areas bordering the road while watching the progress of the convoy. All of a sudden they too received fire.

'I was flying at tree top level when I began receiving small arms fire,' noted LOH pilot Warrant Officer Robert Collins of Cleveland, Ohio. 'As I increased speed to get from the middle of the enemy fire zone, my door gunner dropped marker smoke as a target for the Cobra gunships.'

"As the smoke billowed, the Blackhawk gunships rolled in from the skies to dump their lethal load of rockets and minigun fire on the enemy-infested area. 'The tracer rounds were coming hot and heavy as we went in,' noted Captain Willis Haycock of Columbus, Ga. 'But after a short time we had 'em softened up a little.'

"Three secondary explosions were noted by the Cobra pilots as they worked the area. In a sweep of the jungle undergrowth by men of the 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry called in from neighboring fire bases and an armored element from the 1st Battalion, 69th Armor, the bodies of five of the enemy attackers were found."

So went Grossberg's story. From a driver's point of view, Slattery knew full well he could depend on support from the bridge and road security elements at the first sign of trouble. Each time he waved from his cab to the security elements along the road, it was a wave of friendship, trust and respect. Bridge and road security, he knew, was just as important as getting supplies through. But what of the men scattered along this ribbon of dangerous road?

According to Master Sergeant Billy J. Dennis of Killeen, Tex., Operations Sergeant for the 1st Battalion, 69th Armor, "The primary mission of the battalion is highway, bridge and pipeline security. Our area of responsibility extends from the An Khe Pass to the Mang Yang Pass. I would estimate that we have about 45 miles of roadway to secure."

The remaining stretch of road, from the Mang Yang Pass to Pleiku, is guarded by the 2nd Battalion (Mechanized), 8th Infantry, which operates from Firebase Blackhawk in a manner similar to that of the 1st Battalion, 69th Armor.

The men of both of these battalions are well aware of the great responsibility they have in keeping Highway 19 from enemy hands. This roadway is the vital artery in the supply system for the Central Highlands of Vietnam. Tons of food, fuel and ammunition are among some of the supplies traveling over the route daily.

Specialist Four Wayne Klappa of North Ridge, Ill., is a member of a crew guarding one of the many bridge sites along the highway. He explained his job and duties this way: "Although it probably seems to some that guarding a bridge is boring, I must admit that we haven't had enough time to be bored since going to work at this site a couple of months ago. It seems that there is always something that has to be done—especially improving our defenses. But one of the benefits of the job is that we usually take time off for a swim when it gets hot in the afternoon."

The personnel at Specialist Klappa's bridge are joined at night by the men who spend their day on strong points along the highway. With tanks and Armored Personnel Carriers (APCs), they bolster the defenses of the bridges against possible night attacks by Communist forces.

Staff Sergeant Steve Schmidt of Oxford, Ohio, a tank commander, talked of his role in highway defense: "After spending the night at the bridge site, we prepare to move out as early as possible in the morning, generally beginning the inspection of the shoulders of the highway about 6:00 a.m. An interesting contraption is towed behind the tank. We drive along on the concrete roadway while the mine rollers, made of old rubber tires, go over the dirt shoulders in search of mines 'Charlie' may have buried over night. Culverts are also thoroughly checked.

"After completing the sweep of the roadway assigned to us," continued the tank commander, "we head for our strong point. That's the area along the roadway where we set up during the day until the last convoy has gone through. As we enter the area, we make a thorough check for mines and booby traps. While on post, we man our weapons and carefully check the area, watching for any possible enemy threat against our position or the traffic on the road. The positions are elevated for maximum effective visual range. Our vehicles are positioned to provide mutual support for one another should any trouble occur.

"We also give support to any infantry units that may be making sweeps of the area around us," noted Sergeant Schmidt. "We are on constant call should there be a position near us that is being attacked by an enemy force. Occasionally the infantry fire bases along the highway receive mortar and rocket rounds during the day, and we are also ready to go to their aid should we be needed."

And go they do! Just ask convoy drivers like Specialists Bob Grossberg and Will Slattery.

UNSUNG HEROES: CASE NUMBER 1

Postal People

Neither rain, nor snow, nor dark of night, Nor guard duty, nor tracers bright . . . .

Or, perhaps more appropriate for September in Vietnam. . .

Neither rain, nor rain, nor rain. . .

Either phrase could well serve as a suitable motto for the Fourth Division's APO operation.

The Postal People are this issue's Unsung Heroes. It's not often we consider their role in bringing us those daily letters—except, of course when the letters aren't so daily. Then we direct plenty of comments their way.

But the Postal People are dedicated to getting you that all-important mail just as soon as it comes into country. And it does come in: nearly 200,000 pounds arrives at the Camp Enari APO each month, destined for soldiers scattered over the largest division AO in Vietnam. In addition, close to the same amount of mail flows into the APO, meets incoming mail head on, and somehow ends up on its way back to the World.

Money orders are also big business—to the tune of $1,500,000 each month. That's a lot of money and, as you might imagine, a lot of corresponding paperwork.

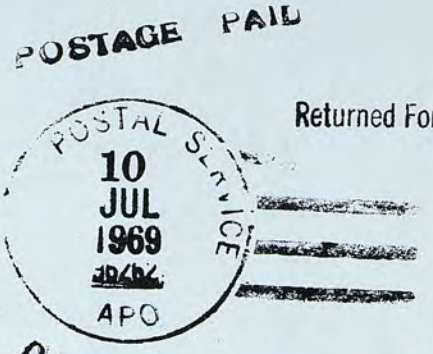
But the mail—words from home about the kids, your sweetheart's graduation and even the left rear quarter of the car that your wife introduced to a road sign that slippery morning in Chicago—that's what counts. Letters, boxes, papers and packages cascade into the APO and Postal People race the clock so they are not caught with a crowded sorting room when the next batch rains in.

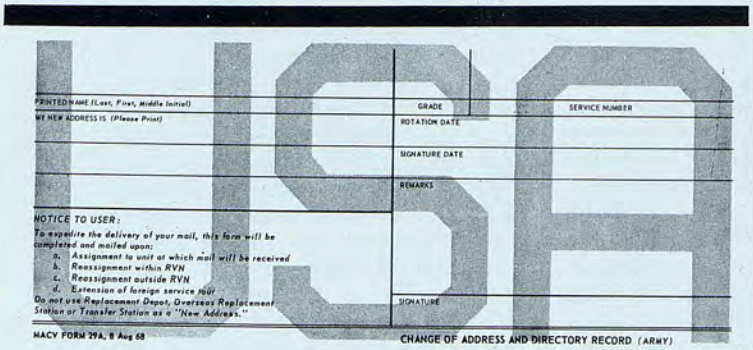
"We know how important mail is to your morale," summarized Master Sergeant Tommie McArthur of Ellensburg, Wash., postal NCOIC, "and do whatever we can to make sure you get it without delay. Transportation priorities sometimes delay the mail an extra day when it has to go forward, but seldom any more than that. Mail is third priority—behind food and ammo —and is delivered as regularly as the tactical situation allows."

While recognizing the Postal People, we ought not forget the unit mail clerks who brave constant harassment from everyone in the performance of their daily duty. How many times can a guy be asked, "Howscum I didn't get any mail?" in a year's tour?

To the Postal People, then, we say "Thanks! We appreciate what you're doing. Without you, life here would be tough."

Next issue—another salute to the Unsung Heroes—the guys who gut it out daily with little recognition. According to the Postal People, it's better to say thanks with this feature than to have everyone send a card!





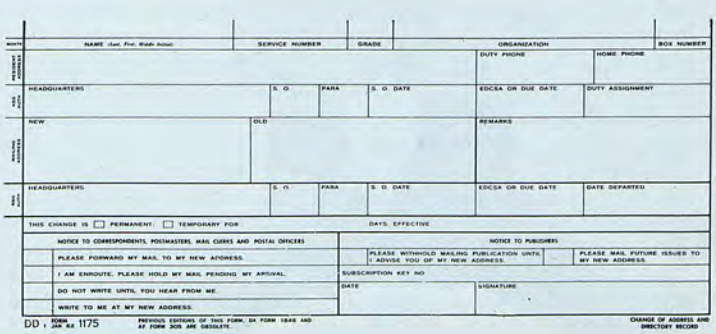
Now that we've saluted the Postal People let's look at two ways to make their work easier: Postal Locater Cards.

The big bennie, though, is that they get your mail to you fast!

Procedure? Simple! Fill out the USA card and let it send itself—postage free—to Area Postal Directory in Saigon.

DD From 1175—the one with the bite out of the corner—is to be filled out and addressed to your losing unit, gaining unit, local APO and anyone else you want to know your new address. Again, postage is free.

And remember: locater cards are especially important when you DEROS. Don't forget them in the excitement!



My Steel Pot

by henri gibsen

My steel pot is my constant friend;
It's very useful, too.
I use it for a bathing tub
And cooking pot for stew.

I keep it close at hand at night;
It listens close for sounds
And leaps upon my tender head
When in scream mortar rounds.

I wear it when I'm on a hike
Although it hurts my head.
I figure I'm much better off
Sore but not so dead.

Photography : 1LT David R. Hooks

Faust

Citadel of freedom

Nestled atop a slight rise overlooking two gently sloping valleys just outside Pleiku City is the Highland Junior Military Academy, an institution which is unique throughout the Republic of Vietnam. The academy—staffed by an ARVN cadre and one American GI and funded by the Government of Vietnam (GVN)—is unique in that enrollment is limited to Montagnard males between 12 and 18 years old whose fathers have served in sustained military operations against Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army (NVA) soldiers.

Each year these eager young men travel long distances from their tribal villages scattered throughout the Central Highlands, intent upon completing a modern education and becoming more closely identified with the principles of the Republic of Vietnam and the Free World.

Highest priority for admission to the academy's corps of cadets is reserved for the sons of Montagnards who have died in combat operations in the Central Highlands. Other prospective cadets must fulfill rigid entrance requirements, including a battery of written examinations and a personal interview, before being admitted.

Yet the endurance of the stern discipline and rigors of the academic grind prove especially valuable upon graduation. Aside from earning a much coveted academy diploma, graduating cadets become corporals in the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces. Six months later they receive automatic promotions to the grade of sergeant. Then numerous options become available. Some of the graduates enter Officer Training Schools where they pursue studies leading to a reserve officer commission, while others are schooled in officer speciality branches and remain on active duty for indefinite periods of time. A third group finds that their academic preparation has grounded them well in the field of education; these young Montagnards become teachers in Dak To, Ban Me Thuot, Pleiku, or Kontum, but may be called to active duty as ARVN reserve officers.

According to Lieutenant Nguyen Hoc Hai, of the academy's administration and teaching staff, the goal of the school is the development of the whole man as a useful citizen who will be morally and intellectually equipped to assume the responsibilities of free individuals in a free society. Hence a curriculum somewhat similar to that of a typical U.S. high school has been developed. The Montagnards are taught mathematics (including algebra, trigonometry, and geometry), general science, geography, physics, chemistry and languages. While at the school the Montagnards remain free to practice the religion of their choice.

A typical day for the Montagnard cadets begins with physical training shortly after 5:00 a.m. The usual calisthenics have been integrated into their physical training schedule. An early morning flag-raising ceremony comparable with our command reveille follows P. T. While the corps of cadets sings the Republic of Vietnam national anthem, the Vietnamese flag is hoisted high above the courtyard. Every Monday morning the students can look forward to being addressed by the Commandant of the academy, Lieutenant Colonel Hien. A Montagnard himself, the dynamic Hien is able to reach the boys very well during his weekly pep talks.

Following the flag-raising, the cadets are marched to the mess hall, where they breakfast daily at 6:30 a.m. Strict discipline is enforced until they are seated at the sturdy concrete tables; then the immaculate mess hall resounds with typical mealtime chatter.

Fifty-minute classes are scheduled between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., with military training integrated into the academic program on three half-days a week. Map reading, close order drill and weapons familiarization and training are stressed. The cadets pride themselves in being able to disassemble an M16 rifle, US carbine, or .45 caliber pistol and reassemble it while blindfolded in less than thirty seconds.

In the evenings the cadets are responsible for completing their written assignments, keeping their billets and uniforms in a state of good repair, and pulling guard. Each night, 30 to 40 of the older cadets leave their comfortable dormitory-style billets to keep watch on the school's perimeter. The valleys alongside the school are natural infiltration routes into the heart of Pleiku City, and although local militia patrol the area, the cadets take great pride in personally manning the defensive bunkers around their citadel. On at least two occasions the academy has been subjected to B40 rockets and mortar fire, but never have the local VC been able to penetrate the academy's defenses.

Two and one half years ago the Famous Fighting Fourth Infantry Division formally adopted the academy as a gesture of friendship. Since that time the Division Artillery's S5 section has shown special interest in the school as part of its Civic Action program. In November of 1967, for example, DIVARTY sponsored an excursion to Southern California for six of the cadets. At the time, DIVARTY felt that the trip would give the Montagnard cadets a good idea of how American secondary military schools operated. After a month and a half, the six cadets returned with many new insights into military education and American life which they enthusiastically shared with their fellow cadets.

During 1967 and 1968, the Fourth Division provided the academy with engineering support for the expansion of the school's facilities. In turn the cadets, dressed in their distinctive crisp white uniforms and scarlet berets, participated in DIVARTY's Medical Civic Action Program (MEDCAP) as interpreters for medical aid teams who diagnosed and treated the Montagnard villagers near Pleiku and Camp Enari.

While on these MEDCAPSs the students explained the benefits of village sanitation and personal hygiene to the Montagnards. They also took it upon themselves to tell their fellow tribesmen about the Government of Vietnam's plans for spurring economic development in the Highlands, for establishing tribal courts in the province capitals, and for locating Revolutionary Development cadre in the villages.

In view of the academy's success over the past two and one half years, it has become recognized as a citadel of freedom by the Government of Vietnam. DIVARTY still plays a key role, however. The S5 section provides the school with an American GI who serves on the faculty as well as the S5 liaison between DIVARTY and the school. For almost five months, Specialist 4 Frank Sabel of Cleveland, Ohio, has taught English grammar and pronunciation classes for the corps of cadets. In his spare time Sabel tutors the ARVN cadre who are interested in bettering their knowledge of English.

How does it feel to be the only American among over 250 Montagnard cadets? According to Specialist Sabel, there's only one way to explain it—"Wholly self-satisfying."

"The students are just as anxious to learn English as they are to learn Vietnamese," said Sabel. "Moreover, they are very anxious to excel in all of their studies. Too many of them have seen their families and friends either killed or tortured by the NVA or abducted by the VC. That's why they take such interest in a subject like Vietnamese Civics. They realize that they represent a minority group in the republic, and they want to become entirely united with the Vietnamese citizenry. They have discovered that an educated body of citizens is an absolute requirement in the operation of democracy."

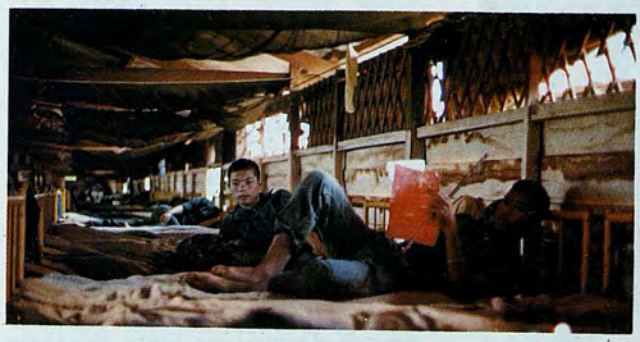
Foust

A cadet's pride in his appearance often prompts some extracurricular activity.

According to Sabel, two of the most difficult problems the Montagnard cadets have to cope with while at the school are the introduction to the Vietnamese language and homesickness. "They all come from different tribes with different dialects," noted Sabel, "and Vietnamese is an entirely new language for them. It takes a little time, but, like anything else, they are able to master it. The second problem they experience is a little more difficult to resolve. In the villages the Montagnards enjoy very close familial ties, so long periods of separation from their families cause real hardship. Consequently they are given one month vacations at three different times during the year.

"I have never felt more important at any job I've ever held," Sabel went on. "I'm the only American in their constant presence, and it's up to me to present a good image of the division and America. Teaching them has given me great confidence, and I'm sure they trust me. I even become their father-confessor on occasion. Like other normal teenagers, they are very interested in females. They often kid me ironically about the great difficulty I will have in returning to my wife once my tour is ended."

by CPT David R. Fabian



Recreation takes varied forms

Cadets' mess is a picture of order and discipline

Cadets take blindfold test

Photography :
PFC Steven Faust

"And all I paid was. . ."

a glimpse at ourselves

Words by 1LT Jerry Hale
Pictures by SP4 Carson Waterman

Perhaps in-processing upon arrival in Vietnam should include a "Planned Interest and Expenditure Declaration"—for the benefit of us, the individual soldiers.

To complete this portion of his orientation, the new guy would fill out and sign AB(for Anti-Bankruptcy). Form 1, which would require his statement as follows:

> While serving in the Republic of Vietnam I will get totally and irresistibly hooked on (check one):
>
> a. cameras
>
> b. stereo equipment

This little form could save each of us a cool five hundred to one thousand dollars. You see, nearly every Vietnam returnee goes home hung-up on pictures and sounds. The declaration might help limit it to an "either-or" proposition.

Nowhere has the cliche, "I'm going broke saving money!" been more appropriate. It's strange. Because regardless of what else it is, Vietnam is a great place to accumulate a small fortune. Hazardous duty pay boosts our salaries, and Soldiers' Deposit, Bonds, Freedom Shares and other allotments, all handled smoothly by the finance types, make saving as easy as $1, $2, $3. Besides, there isn't any place to spend any money over here anyway. Right?

Well, we must concede a few complicating factors. Like PX, PACEX and Pacific Mail Order, to mention a few.

Even more complicating, we're at an extreme financial disadvantage. A weird phenomenon—called "Prolific Purchasing"—infects all of us between the first and third month after we arrive in country. Medical authorities are baffled; theories have been advanced that attribute the "disease" to a mutant anopheles mosquito, to a slight impurity in potable water, to minor shell shock from outgoing 155mm rounds and to a mysterious side effect of long periods of sexual inactivity. But these are only theories. The real cause and, more importantly, the cure, continue to evade investigators.

The symptoms are obvious. Prolific Purchasing first appears as an irresistible urge among box camera owners and others who have never taken a picture in their lives to discuss in great detail light metering systems, lens apertures, shutter speeds, ASAs and depths of field—all completely foreign and unfamiliar concepts. In the audio variation of the same disease, the compulsion to hash over inches per second, channel output, frequency response, woofers and tweeters appears among those of us whose only former exposure to high fidelity was from car radios, transistors and juke boxes in drive-in restaurants.

As the symptoms become more advanced, we find ourselves engrossed in heated arguments over brand specifications and spending hours on end studying—no, memorizing—photographic and sound system catalogs and advertisements. The discussions mature and are soon based on indisputable fact; experts are brought into play as quotes from PHOTOGRAPHY and STEREO REVIEW salt and pepper the conversation.

And at this point we're hooked. All of us conservative spenders—man, we used to devote weeks to deciding whether to spend $20 on black or cordovan loafers—hit the purchaser's trail with the enthusiasm of a door gunner over enemy troops in the open.

And here the most unique and severe of the symptoms becomes evident: cost is absolutely no object!

Of course we rationalize a little to ease our consciences. "Just look what I'm getting for my money. Why, this outfit would cost three times what I'm paying if I had bought it in the States." The fallacy is simple: we never would have bought it in the States.

Stop and consider how difficult a five or six-hundred dollar purchase would have been nine or ten months

ago. Parting with that money would have been murder. But the line at the money order window shortly after payday testifies to how painlessly purchases are made over here.

And $500 or $600 is perhaps a conservative figure. Because we aren't simply talking about cameras. We're talking, for example, about 35 mm Single Lens Reflexes with through-the-lens metering, interchangeables lenses, standard 55 mm f 1.4s. We're talking about wide angles, telephotos, zooms, filters, strobes, tripods, copiers and cable releases.

And we're talking about decks, recorders, turntables, tuners, amplifiers, speakers, reels, cassettes and cartridges.

I mean, after all, if you're going to get a camera. . . well, really, what *good* is it without a few lenses and other accessories. And the complete sound system *requires* several components. The only question becomes, "How did I exist without this stuff for so long?"

So finally all decisions are made and it's time to fill out those order forms. In the short time it takes, every expert in the world happens by.

"What'cha doing?"

"Ordering my camera stuff."

"What'cha gettin'?"

Complete description.

"Any lenses?"

"Sure. A 35 mm wide angle and a 200 mm telephoto. Plus flash and all that."

"You know, there's a great 80–200 mm zoom for that camera, and you really ought to buy a 28 mm if you're going to buy a wide angle."

"Oh, yeah?" A stroke of the pen and stock numbers 1A56 and 1A59 become 1A72 and 1A94; the total, of course, leaps by a corresponding $120. Means nothing. Undaunted, the mad purchaser completes the order.

And later in your tour. . .

"Listen, if you just get the 40 watt amp. . . well, someday you may want to put a speaker or two in the john and you'll need more output." Again the grand total is upped to reflect the change from 40 watts to 120.

Then comes the toughest decision. "Can I wait 30–45 days or should I have it sent airmail? 10% of $350 amounts to only. . . "

And airmail it is.

The disease often reaches its pinnacle among certain stereo buffs. These guys spend $600 on the best the market offers, all the time dreaming how groovy it will be to have friends into the pad back in the world to listen to great sounds as tape passes through "premium super hyperbolic-type heads with narrow gaps which provide a wide frequency range, minimize crosstalk, improve signal-to-noise ratios and furnish a distortion-free quality of sound reproduction with unsurmountable longevity" and to have everyone sitting on the edge of his chair, mesmerized by turning reels, waiting patiently for the sensor tape to activate the automatic reverse. And then these same experts order earphones so no one else will hear the incomparable sounds produced by the monster.

Once the equipment arrives and is installed–a wall of shiny electronics somewhat out of place in a less-than-lavish hootch or bunker—the most valuable thing in the world is tape. Pre-recordeds, all dubbed onto one huge reel. It's almost a form of currency. The guy with the latest Aretha album or, even better, one of those six-hour airline jobs, can bargain for anything under the Vietnam sun.

After going completely broke and thus becoming temporarily immune to Prolific Purchasing, we sit among our maze of new purchases and arrive at a rather startling conclusion. A great deal of the fascination is not in the performance of this super sophisticated gear. What we're buying, guys, are sophisticated (and expensive) toys. Sure, taking pictures provides a record of our experiences. But pictures can be taken on a much smaller scale, and wives, sweethearts and relatives would never know the difference. But that's not what we're after. Playing with all those accessories—changing lenses, checking out Vietnam's greens and browns through a red filter, worrying about whether or not the debris in a chopper's rotor wash will scratch the finely-ground lens—that's the sheer ecstasy we groove on.

You shorttimers know what I mean. You've felt it. Prolific Purchasing does strike, and strike hard. You new guys will soon be infected, too. But don't feel guilty. It happens to all of us.

For your own financial welfare, make up your own AB Form 1 and sign it sincerely. If not, you'll end up with a complete system that enables you to take beautiful, wide-angled, telephoted, filtered flash pictures of your brand new turntable-tuner-amp-speaker-tape rig.

New car anyone?

Truly Professionals

Artwork by SP4 Lou Orsan

By 1LT John A. Doran

The northernmost regions of Kontum Province have always been of great tactical significance throughout the years of bitter conflict which have torn Vietnam for more than a generation. The infamous Ho Chi Minh Trail runs past the Tri-Border area where Vietnam is bounded by the neighboring countries of Cambodia and Laos. As a North Vietnamese Army (NVA) infiltration and supply route, the trail serves as the gateway to the population centers of Dak To, Polei Kleng and Kontum City in the Highlands, and as a staging area from which the NVA depart in search of targets in the south, particularly Saigon.

Until early 1969, the defense of this crucial terrain had been the responsibility of the First Brigade of the Famous Fighting Fourth Infantry Division. Today, however, soldiers of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) are safeguarding this region of country and demonstrating to the world their ability to protect their own destiny.

Understandably, the ARVN takeover has not been an easy task. The shift from American to ARVN responsibility has been, of necessity, gradual and has required complex coordination and planning to insure success. As the world looks toward Vietnam, the recurring questions have been: "Can the ARVN someday go it alone? Can they handle it?" Despite skepticism and pessimism in some quarters of the world press, the ARVN in northern II Corps have of late shown the world through their decisive action at Chu Pa Mountain, on "Rocket Ridge" at Dak To, and more recently, at Ben Het, that they are indeed ready and willing to do the job.

As President Nixon decided in June of this year, United States units are being replaced by ARVN in those areas where ARVN are capable of affecting that replace-

ment. The eventual resolution of the conflict, Mr. Nixon has indicated, lies in the ability of the ARVN to take over gradually the responsibility for areas in which U.S. combat forces have operated.

Inevitably the mettle of an army is tested on the battlefield. In II Corps, the battlefield can mean a thickly-forested mountain ridgeline, a strategic hilltop, a valley floor where streams and jungle undergrowth mingle in primordial tropical splendor, the commonplace Asian rice paddie, or the streets of a crowded city like Pleiku or Kontum.

The manifold difficulties of conducting sustained combat activities in such an environment will be readily acknowledged by American units which have fought with distinction in the Central Highlands. The 101st Airborne Division, the 173rd Airborne Brigade and, most significantly, the Famous Fighting Fourth Infantry Division have fought with enviable success in the Highlands, particularly in the mountains which ring Dak To. These Americans will attest to the physical stamina needed to fight in the Highlands. And they will also willingly credit the obstinate tenacity of the foe they have fought.

A large part of the responsibility in northern II Corps today has been assumed by the ARVN. How they perform and cope with this awesome responsibility is an indicator to the world—a reflection of Vietnamese progress in the face of adversity. The foreboding mountains

Ryan

ARVN soldiers, alert and ready to move out, south of Dak To

and lush tropical rain forests are the Highland proving grounds for the ARVN. Attention to ARVN activities in the Highlands is constantly focused on the Kontum-Pleiku Province area, where the Government of Vietnam (GVN) has established the 24th Special Tactical Zone (STZ). It is both an operational area and a command, with headquarters centrally located in Kontum City. Here access to Dak To to the north and Pleiku to the south is readily available via Highway 14. Highway 511 connects Kontum with the strategic area of Polei Kleng to the west. As an operational area, the 24th STZ covers Kontum and Pleiku Provinces: as a command it exercises operational control of the ARVN forces in the area.

The man charged with this responsibility is Colonel Nguyen Ba Lien, the Commanding Officer of the 24th STZ. Forces under Colonel Lien's operational control include the 42nd ARVN Infantry Regiment, the 63rd ARVN Artillery Battalion (105 howitzers), and the 3rd ARVN Armored Cavalry Regiment, which secures Highway 14 from Ben Het near the Tri-Border Area to Kontum City itself. There are also five intelligence platoons and three scout (recon) companies. During several large scale operations, Colonel Lien has also had the crack 11th, 22nd and 23rd ARVN Ranger Battalions under his operational control.

Colonel Lien operates a tactical command post at Dak To, formerly the command post of the First Brigade of the Fourth Infantry Division. In his more recent operations, he has been closely associated with the Division's Second Brigade—the Highlanders—since the First Brigade has moved its operations to An Khe.

The 24th STZ was created in June, 1965, when the 22nd ARVN Infantry Division moved out of Pleiku and Kontum Provinces, leaving behind the 42nd ARVN Infantry Regiment to provide security for the newly formed STZ. The mission of the 24th STZ is twofold—to defeat the enemy within the STZ and to stop Communist infiltration across the western borders.

The NVA has been dealt many significant defeats in the rugged terrain of the Central Highlands by the ARVN forces. In 1968, troops of the 24th STZ killed more than 4,600 enemy forces and captured 1,430 individual and 174 crew-served weapons. Friendly losses were put at 471, giving the ARVN a respectable kill ratio of almost 10 to1.Operations Binh Tay (Sledgehammer) 48, 49 and 50 earlier this year accounted for over 400 enemy dead. These operations were conducted in the former Chu Pa Mountain sanctuary of an NVA regiment. Thousands of rounds of enemy ammunition and hundreds of weapons of all sizes, along with tons of supplies and foodstuffs, were captured by the troops of the 24th STZ. Operations Dan Quyen (Peoples' Rights) 38, 38A, 40 and 41 took place on the infamous "Rocket Ridge" overlooking Dak To and resulted in the deaths of 1400 enemy soldiers and the capture of a great amount of enemy arms and equipment.

Presently, the 24th STZ is engaged in a continuing effort to thwart attacks on population centers and to expand its pacification program. In December of 1968, the 24th STZ resettled 2,335 Montagnards in the Plei Ia You resettlement area north of Pleiku. Prior to this resettlement, the Montagnards had been the victims of a Viet Cong terrorist campaign and had worked as forced laborers for the enemy. Colonel Lein himself took charge of the resettlement program. As a direct result of his initiative, planning and frequent consultations with the Montagnard leaders, Plei Ia You has become, in the words of a ranking U.S. advisor, "one of the best and most successful resettlement areas in Kontum and Pleiku Provinces."

Colonel Lien, a veteran of 16 years' service, is a graduate of the United States Marine Corps Officers Advanced Course at Quantico, Virginia. Before coming to the 24th STZ, he held a series of command assignments, including one as commander of a Vietnamese Marine Brigade. Colonel Alexander M. Weyend, Senior U.S. Advisor to the 24th STZ, praises Colonel Lien as "the man who makes the 24th STZ go—through accurate intelligence and sound tactics, he's the man who keeps the pressure on the enemy."

Colonel Lien is recognized by others as a thorough tactician and a hard taskmaster. A no-nonsense type of leader, he gets things done. He has shown himself to be cool under fire and patient when the situation requires it. A man of action, he exhibits all the favorable traits Westerners have come to expect in a military leader.

One leader does not make an army, and fortunately Colonel Lien has many able commanders. Lieutenant Colonel Dinh The Thoai, Commander of the 42nd ARVN Infantry Regiment, has made his unit into a hardened, combat-ready and battle-tested fighting force.

Ryan

Colonel Nguyen Ba Lien, Commander 24th STZ

In the words of one U.S. officer, "The 42nd Regiment has become a top fighting outfit."

The typical soldier of the 24th STZ may find himself taking part in a combat operation, driving children to and from school, doing construction work on a Buddhist pagoda or Catholic school, or participating in local sweep operations. When darkness comes to the Central Highlands, he may be on a patrol or manning a defensive position. Since he does not spend much time in garrison, his time with his family is limited. Colonel Lien tries to rotate his troops so that the men may be with their families as much as possible. Responsible for more than 1,000 square miles of mountainous jungle and for the security of 200,000 Montagnards and 85,000 Vietnamese, the ARVN soldier is certainly a busy man. Here in the Highlands, the men of the 24th STZ are proving themselves formidable foes to Communist aggressors and infiltrators.

Colonel Weyend puts it this way: "The 24th STZ is a fighting force in its own right. With U.S. helicopter, artillery, and tactical air support, it has proven itself superior to every NVA unit it has come up against."

The men of the 24th STZ live with their families in dependent housing areas in Tan Canh, Kontum and Pleiku, and are working on dependent housing quarters in each of these cities. Crucial building materials—lumber, cement, and roofing—have been made available through the efforts of the Fourth Division. Construction according to official GVN specifications is now underway for 120 units, similar to Western-style motels, with each unit housing 10 families.

The longer range plans for the dependent housing facilities include indoor plumbing, a feature non-existent in current Highland dwellings. Each home will have a bedroom area, kitchen, and living room as well. The houses are low-slung, almost ranch-type affairs that are a significant improvement over the make-shift houses the ARVN have used in the past for dependent housing.

The men of the 24th STZ so far this year have earned better than 300 Vietnamese valor awards and 25 U.S. awards. Colonel Lien and his deputy, Lieutenant Colonel Bui Dac Tai, have both been awarded U.S. Silver Stars.

ARVN redlegs on a fire support base in the Central Highlands. Ready...

Ryan

Ryan

...Fire!

The ARVN troops have continued relentlessly in all phases of their operations to exert the maximum effort to get the job done. Continuous training in tactics, weaponry and communications procedures are the mainstays of an effort which is uncompromising in its dedication.

Progress is neither manifested overnight nor in single successes. Given the habit of success, the confidence of a victor and the technical know-how of a professional, the ARVN soldiers have shown remarkable progress and determination in the performance of their mission. They are truly professionals. They have to be. The future of the Highlands is in their hands. The men of the 24th STZ have taken great steps forward for themselves and their country. Here in the most critical terrain of the Central Highlands, they have proven that they have what it takes. After all, that's what this war is all about.

Ryan

Soldiers of the 4th Battalion, 42nd ARVN Infantry Regiment, at work on dependent housing in Tan Canh, in northern Kontum Province.

Ryan

Troopers of the 3rd ARVN Armored Cavalry intent on their mission of securing vital Highway 14.

MARIJUANA?

Wouldn't You Really Rather Have a DEROS?

his brothers' keeper

As told to
CPT David R. Fabian

Sweat glazed the forehead of Specialist Four Roland "Jim" Jemerson as the noonday sun hung high above the dirt-packed road between Plei Mrong and Landing Zone Bobbie. Jemerson, a combat medical aidman assigned with Company B, 2nd Battalion (Mech), 8th Infantry, craned his neck. Through the dust being churned up by the resupply convoy he was able to see the two friendly villages in the distance. He had traveled the road before, and the villages always indicated that the convoy was nearly ready to close at LZ Bobbie.

Jemerson shifted his weight. The top of the track was like fire to his touch. Usually he rode in the cargo hatch, today his unit was carting extra supplies to Bobbie, so he rode atop the 'two-four' box. He could cope with the sun, he thought to himself; he had done so for the past four and a half months. But whenever his box drew drag—rear security element for the resupply convoy—the swirling Highland dust was sometimes blinding, always choking. . . .

Moments after Jemerson saw the villages in the distance the convoy ground to a sudden halt. The lead vehicle was struck by a B40 rocket fired from the left side of the road. Almost simultaneously the other Armored Personnel Carriers in the convoy moved to the berms, their caliber 50's ripping into the flanking woodlines not more than twenty-five meters off the sides of the road.

Jemerson heard the convoy commander's voice crackle over the radio. First Sergeant Odd O. Pedersen told the drag element to move up to the initial point of contact to lend fire support to the disabled APC near the front of the column. Judging from the heavy volume of fire, Pedersen, a native of Tampa, Florida, estimated that the convoy was up against a company-sized enemy force dug in bunkers alongside the road.

"Harry, our driver, raced the box up the road," recalled Jemerson, "and when we got close enough to the point of contact, he turned into the direction of the enemy's small arms and B40 rocket fire.

"We were blazing away when he stopped the box. Anytime we've been in contact before, Harry would always stop the box and jump out of his driver's hatch to help link the fifty. That's just what he did that day. He was on top of the box with his back to the enemy, linking like hell, when he was hit in the back of the neck by flying metal from a B40."

Jemerson grabbed his aid bag and leapt over the cargo hatch as enemy small arms fire chipped away at the side and front of the "two-four" track. He patched the driver's wounds and then pulled him down into the crowded cargo hatch.

Meanwhile Specialist Four Kenneth Lester of Crab Orchard, West Virginia, took over as driver and whipped the Armored Personnel Carrier around so that the crew could put out its firepower in another direction. Pedersen's voice came over the radio again, telling them to move a bit closer up the road.

"Lester reacted immediately. We passed 'Top' Pedersen on the road. He was now on foot, moving from one vehicle to the next, passing out ammo. He had already been wounded twice but refused aid. Then he started calling in artillery and air strikes over the enemy positions.

"We kept moving up, weaving in and out of the stalled deuce and a halfs, when I noticed that another box had been hit. I jumped off the 'two-four' track and headed for it. Inside there were two men injured, one very seriously. I dragged them out alongside their track, where I quickly dressed their wounds as best I could," Jemerson said.

"I saw two rounds just miss Doc Jemerson's leg by a fraction of an inch as he treated those two wounded men," recalled Sergeant William W. Rabun, Jr., of Detroit, Michigan. "But he kept right on giving aid," said the sergeant, who passed Jemerson on the road while driving his own track toward the head of the column.

After the men's wounds were dressed, Jemerson dragged them to the opposite side of the road and instructed them to return fire as well as they were able. He covered one of the wounded with his shirt. Then, ignoring the withering fire that kicked up dust around him, the medic scooped up his aid bag and ran over an open stretch of road to the next disabled vehicle.

Although the track had already taken one B40, it was not badly damaged. But just as Jemerson approached, the track was subjected to intense automatic weapons fire which wounded four of its crew members. Seconds later another B40 struck and set the track afire. Two of the wounded were caught in the open in front of the vehicle.

While Sergeant Warren D. Cartwright (Duncan, Oklahoma), Specialist Four John H. Bledsoe (Greensboro, North Carolina), and Specialist Four John S. Kraszewski (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania) provided covering fire, the medic inched his way forward under fire and dragged the two men to the rear of their vehicle.

"Then we (Jemerson, Bledsoe, and Kraszewski) went to work freeing the two others from the burning APC. It was packed with artillery rounds and we knew it could explode from a cook-off any minute. Once we got the four men to the other side of the road to safety, I gave them aid while Cartwright, Bledsoe, and Kraszewski returned the enemy's fire."

The burning track exploded minutes later, spewing fragments of armor plating over the roadway. The left side of the APC, according to Jemerson, oozed and blistered into a pool of useless metal.

"After the explosion contact became sporadic," said Jemerson. "It didn't seem like it, but we had been fighting for over an hour. A Fourth Aviation gunship, Blackjack 400, had been overhead about twenty minutes after the fight broke loose. 'Top' Pedersen was directing the runs, but the pilot couldn't pick up the wounded because the fire along the road was so heavy.

" 'Top' Pedersen, a really brave guy, knew it wouldn't be safe to put down on the road, so he waved the pilot off a couple of times. When things eased up after the explosion, though, the chopper pilot set down."

Pedersen, already wounded twice during the battle, still continued to direct friendly fire as the chopper set down. He had Sergeant Rabun move his track up near the evacuation site to provide security. Jemerson, meanwhile, began supervising the evacuation of the wounded. As Jemerson, Cartwright, Kraszewski, Bledsoe, and Pedersen loaded the wounded onto the aircraft, the enemy opened up again with small arms fire. Pedersen was hit in the leg, so when the chopper began to lift off he jumped aboard with the other evacuees.

"The chopper wasn't more than ten feet airborne when a B40 slammed into it and sent it falling to the ground," said the medic. "Pedersen managed to jump clear and then he, I, Cartwright, and Kraszewski ran to the burning aircraft to help free the pilot, copilot,

door gunner and one of the wounded litter patients before the ship exploded. During this time Bledsoe laid down a murderous base of fire. Then everything was quiet, except for a whirring track engine. . . ."

The battle had lasted almost ninety minutes. The enemy, however, had been denied a victory; they had not been able to overrun the convoy. The convoy escort from Charlie Company, 2nd Battalion (Mech), 8th Infantry withstood the attack and drove them back into the woodline.

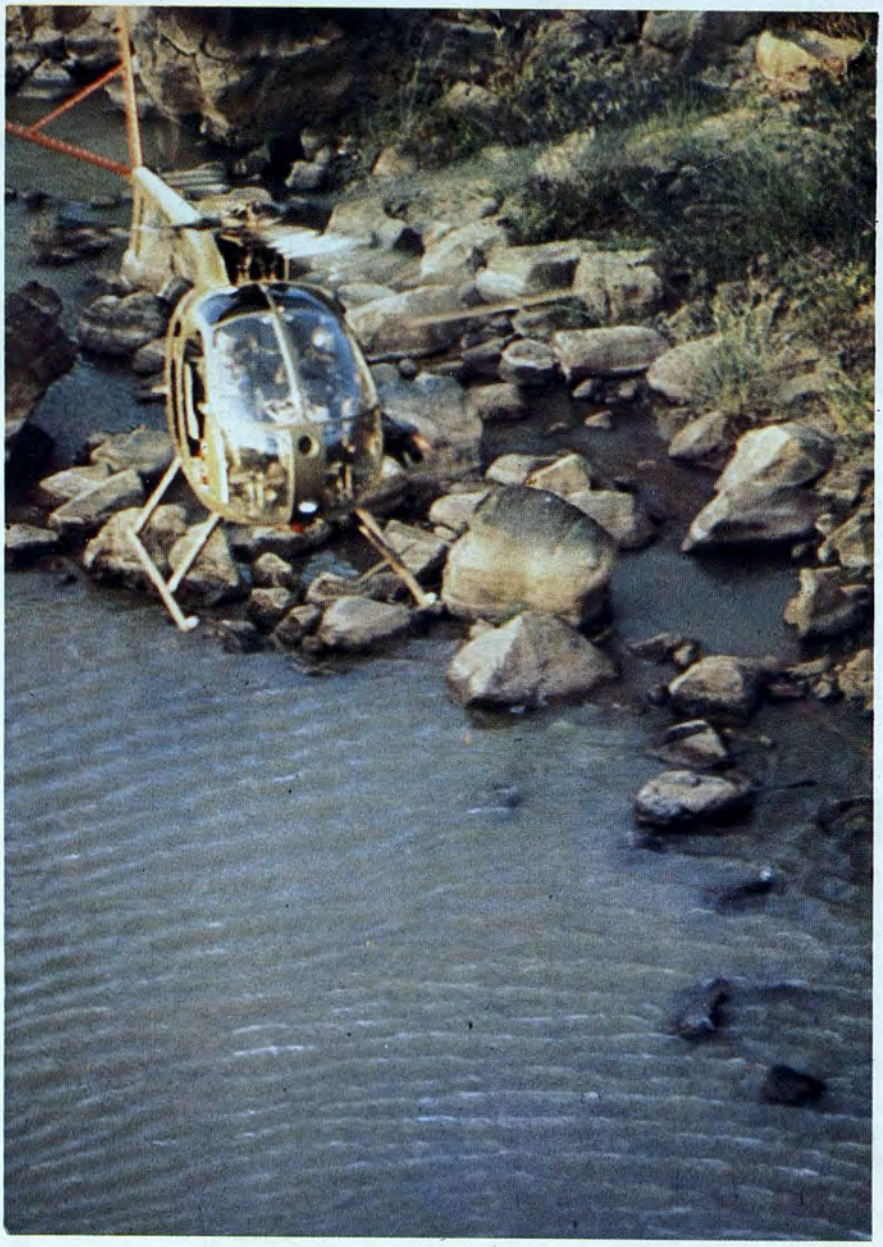
Although contact was broken by 3: 30 p.m., Jemerson's job was not finished. He returned to tend all of the wounded, and it wasn't until that evening that he got to LZ Bobbie.

For their heroic actions Bledsoe, Cartwright and Kraszewski were presented Bronze Star Medals with "V," while First Sergeant Odd O. Pedersen was awarded the Silver Star. And on July 2, 1969, General Creighton W. Abrams presented a Silver Star to Specialist Four Roland Jemerson, of Flint, Michigan, the heroic aid man who was credited with personally saving the lives of twelve of his fellow soldiers on March 22, 1969.

Story and photos by 1LT Robert Janosko

Mini—

BRUTES



The enemy in the Famous Fighting Fourth Division's area of operations is painfully learning not to tangle with the 7th Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry's "minibrutes." The "minibrutes" are small, agile, Light Observation Helicopters (commonly referred to as LOH scout ships) which pack a deadly minigun and a sharpshooting air observer who mans either an M16, CAR 15 or M60 machinegun.

Working in hunter-killer teams consisting of two LOHs and two Cobra gunships, the "minibrutes" skim close to the treetops, ferreting the enemy out of hidden positions and cutting him down as he attempts to escape over open terrain.

Generally, the "minibrutes" work sections of a specified area, calling in periodic spot reports to their Cobra teammates flying above. When a target is spotted, the "minibrute" marks the position and makes a quick engagement. If the target is a small group of enemy soldiers in the open, the pilot positions the ship to give the observer a clear field of fire. If the scout is receiving heavy ground fire from a hidden position, the pilot rakes the area with minigun fire. After the scouts have made several quick passes at the target, the Cobras drop down and hit the area with rockets and more minigun fire. When it appears the target has been eliminated, the scouts assess the area and report the results of the strike.

"Just the whining sound of the minigun has a tremendous psychological effect on the enemy," said CW2 Paul Redhead of Hinsdale, Ill., an ex-scout ship pilot. "We've learned from detainees that they have standing orders not to fire at scouts unless they know for sure they've already been spotted."

Even then, however, Charlie has little chance, for the scout's minigun

"The observer gets two-thirds of minibrute kills, but it is really a team effort."

fires at a selected rate of either 2000 or 4000 rounds per minute. Three-second bursts are regulated automatically; the trigger must be released and then squeezed again for another three second burst. Each "minibrute" carries 2,100 7.62 rounds of minigun ammo—which is quite an arsenal! The firing position of the gun can be controlled by the pilot, but usually the ship's attitude is used to direct the stream of fire.

"You get used to sighting over a certain point on the front of the ship with the gun set in one position. Then you simply point the ship at the target," explained veteran "minibrute" pilot Captain Mark Holbrook of Sheboygan, Wis.

Sergeant Robert Evander of Minneapolis, Minn., serves as a prime example of the "minibrute's" second team member. As an observer with Alpha Troop, Evander has over 70 kills to his credit after 16 months in Vietnam.

"I suppose the observer gets two-thirds of the 'minibrute's' kills, but it's really a team effort. The pilot has to position the ship just right for the observer to fire accurately," commented the sergeant. "Then the observer has his choice of weapons—M16, CAR 15 or M60. While an M60 has more fire power, I prefer an M16 because it's more accurate and easier to handle."

The ship carries 700 rounds for an M60 or about 40 magazines of M16 or CAR 15 ammo. In addition, a "minibrute" carries smoke grenades to mark targets, white phosphorous and incendiary grenades for destroying burnable targets such as camouflaged enemy storage bins spotted along routes of infiltration, and a stockpile of grenades to drive the enemy out into the open and to soften up bunkers and fighting positions.

The little choppers will often drop down to where they are hovering only a few feet off the ground. Very little escapes the trained eye of the observer at that height. It is not unusual for a scout observer to spot a well-camouflaged rice or weapons cache or enemy soldiers on the move from his vantage point in the air. After that it's Goodbye, Charlie.

The nimble little helicopters hovering at tree top level must be tempting targets to a new enemy recruit, but the old veterans have learned that they can get badly stung when they swat a hornet's nest.

Minibrutes drop incendiary grenade on an abandoned rice storage hootch.

" Thanks, Guys

For taking those groovy malaria pills.
The big orange ones every week. And the little white ones every day.
'Cause when you get home, Hugger, we have a lot of catching up to do.
And I just couldn't stand it if our priceless evenings together were interrupted by chills and sweats left over from a bout with malaria.
And I'd simply die if you had to spend time in a nasty old hospital.
Oh, I'd come visit.
But hospitals offer no privacy at all!"

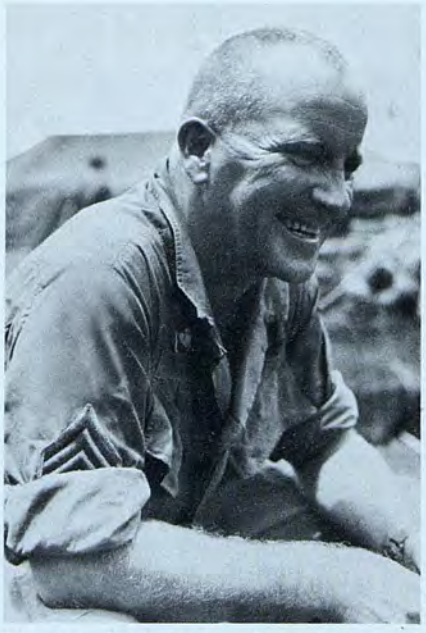
They tell it like it is... and was!

Division Two-Timers

A feeling of being dangerously near history occurs as a new arrival to the Famous Fighting Fourth flies for the first time over a scarred and abandoned mountaintop fire base that was once the sight of heavy fighting. A combat vet leans over toward the new man, gestures to the landscape below, and says very knowingly, "that's where your new unit fought off a regiment in '66." Looking down at the confusion of old shell holes, scattered timbers and torn sandbags, you think to yourself, "It must have been some battle."

Your mind spins and you find yourself imagining what it must have been like then. But the next thing you know, you're with your new unit, and the company commander or a senior NCO is briefing you for the first time. You wonder what he means when, during the briefing, he says, "Last time I was here things were different."

There are several men with the Fourth Division today who can say just that. Always ready with answers concerning the war in the Central Highlands, their experiences are sought by the new arrival and are accepted as a source of lore to the fighting man. These are the two-timers, the dedicated soldiers who add just a little more know-how when it comes to soldiering in the



Hughes

"Living conditions. . .have improved a great deal." —*Mikutaitis*

"Now. . .we are able to pinpoint the enemy, fight him and shag him right out of the country."—Scott

Hughes

Highlands. These are the men who are able to offer valid comparisions and contrasts as to how the war was fought "then," and how we and the enemy are fighting it now.

One such man is First Sergeant John J. ("Mike") Mikutaitis, of Columbia, South Carolina. Between October, 1967 and December, 1968, Mikutaitis was assigned to Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry. At that time the Golden Dragons were placed under the operational control of the Americal Division and operated along the coastal plains. Shortly afterward the battalion was reunited with the Fourth Division and sent to the Dak To area.

For "Top" Mikutaitis, now with Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry, one of the biggest differences between his first tour and his present one is the relative stability of the battalion. "In 1968," commented Mikutaitis, "we were moving from one fire base to the next; we were never in one place very long, and nothing was permanent. Since I have rejoined the battalion during this tour I couldn't help being impressed with the concern shown for division troops in the field. Living conditions have improved on landing zones (LZs) a great deal. Someone back at division recently made it a point to get a dental unit out to our site for a short time. Believe me, little things like this matter, and the division is taking care of us real well."

Mikutaitis, an experienced combat leader and recipient of three Bronze Stars for Valor, all earned while serving as a Golden Dragon, was also quick to point out that the young American soldier is doing an outstanding job. "Improved training in CONUS and the 4th Replacement Detachment certainly is paying off. These men are really prepared," said the First Sergeant.

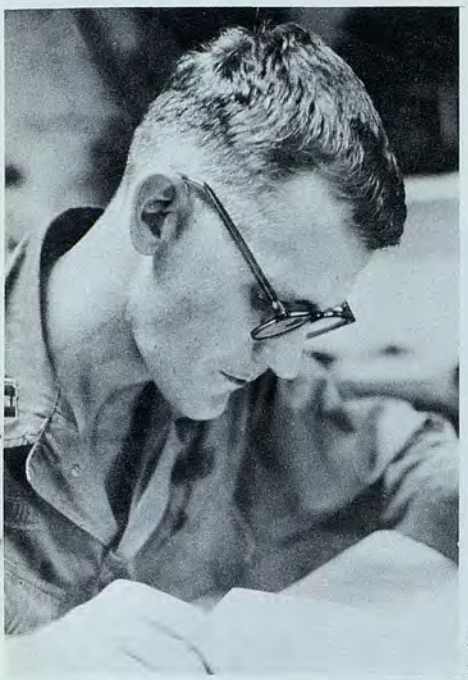
Another former member of the Golden Dragons, Captain James T. Scott, remembers a time when everyone was new in country. Scott came over with the battalion from Hawaii in the Spring of 1966. "At that time we were a part of the Third Brigade, 25th Division. We moved into what is now the traditional Third Brigade area, and the battalion operated with the Fourth Division in the central plains along the Ia Drang River and south near Ban Me Thuot. I was assigned as an Assistant Operations Officer and later commander of Bravo Company. The heaviest battles we fought were in the area north of Duc Co while the brigade was based at Landing Zone Oasis."

Scott rotated back to the U.S. before the Third Brigade of the 25th Division officially became the Third Brigade of the Fourth Division in August of 1967. However, when he volunteered for his second tour, he made it known that he wished an assignment with the Division's Third Brigade. He rejoined the 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry as S3 and has since been assigned S3 of the brigade.

For Captain Scott the most noticeable change since his last tour has been the enemy's situation and tactical deployment. "Last time I operated in this area the enemy was either here in force or not at all. We were either fighting an NVA battalion or we couldn't find anybody. I honestly feel that when we were here with the 25th we spent too much time looking for the enemy. Now, owing to the Fourth's superior intelligence - gathering techniques, we are able to pinpoint the enemy, fight him, and shag him right out of the country within a week or two after detection. Our success definitely rests on our improved ability to find the enemy and keep track of him at all time."

Scott, of Coleman, Texas, also observed that most of the fighting now has been against the local Viet Cong—the infrastructure and the cadre. During his prior tour not much time was spent on the trail of local guerillas.

"I came back to the Highlands because there is a unique challenge here," said Scott. "The Fourth Division has the largest area of



Hughes

"Before, it was common to run into enemy battalions. . . they were trying to move large units."—Brauer

"Their infrastructure has deteriorated. . . the Division has them on the run. . ."—Burr

Hughes

responsibility of any division in country. Under the circumstances, I think we have managed to compile an enviable record which few units can equal."

Captain Vaughn D. Brauer, another member of the brigade S3 section, echoes Captain Scott's observations on the enemy's changing tactical situation. Brauer is a veteran platoon leader and company commander who spent his last tour with Company B, 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry.

"Before, it was common to run into enemy battalions in the Duc Co and Ia Drang Valley area. They were trying to move in large units and when in contact, they employed regular infantry-type tactics. And it was just as common to find multi-battalion sized base camps occupied by the enemy in areas just south of the Oasis."

Brauer contends that the division's constant operations have forced the enemy to operate and maintain their supply bases at relatively long distances from their objectives. But he also concedes that more sophisticated weapons also contribute to the change in enemy tactics.

"During my first tour the largest enemy weapon I remember encountering was the 82 mm mortar. Now they have at their disposal more of an arsenal—including the B40 and 122 mm rockets that characterize their attacks by indirect fire."

Captain Brauer also notices that more and more of the fighting is now directed against local VC forces. He feels the division has been successful in routing the NVA regulars. By keeping them at a distance, Brauer, of Twin Falls, Idaho, feels we are now better able to concentrate on the pacification program.

Brauer has also been in a position which has allowed him to observe the ARVN forces. He feels that they are much better trained and much more aggressive than ever before. "They are just plain better fighters," he said.

Captain Jacky A. Burr, commanding officer of Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry, is another returnee to the Fourth Division and a man with a wealth of experience in the Central Highlands. Captain Burr began his first tour with the Cacti Green as a platoon leader with Company A. He subsequently became S2, S3 and commanded Alpha, Bravo and Charlie Companies. The Tulsa, Oklahoma, native recalls vividly his battalion's operations in the coastal plain area during the early months of 1967. "We fought strong, main-force Viet Cong units coupled with backbone NVA who were trying to solidify the infrastructure in the coastal areas. Our battles were close-in, village-type fighting where there were many bunkers and trenches. Our job was to occupy and maintain strongholds in those areas."

During his second tour with the Division, Burr has commanded Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry, and has served as a Third Brigade Assistant Operations Officer. In Captain Burr's opinion the outlook for the Viet Cong is not as bright this tour as it might have been during the last. "Their infrastructure has deteriorated. They are not as strong and they are definitely having problems with recruiting.

"The Viet Cong are making use of indirect fire attacks more often than in the past. Their tactics are becoming more evasive and similar to their old methods. The Division has them on the run."

Mikutaitis, Scott, Brauer and Burr. They are only four of many. They are your experts on soldiering in the Highlands. Things were different last time they were here, and that's what makes them so valuable now. So listen and observe and put their experience to use. They're the two-timers—and they're proud of it. And they're the kind of men who help you make it through your tour.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS 4TH INFANTRY (IVY) DIVISION
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDING GENERAL
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96262

TO THE OFFICERS AND MEN OF THE FAMOUS FIGHTING FOURTH INFANTRY DIVISION

It is a pleasure to extend to the officers and men of the Famous Fighting Fourth Infantry Division my heartiest congratulations and best wishes as we near the conclusion of our third full year of combat operations in the Republic of Vietnam.

We can indeed look back with pride on our continued success over the past three years. We have engaged in several of the most significant battles of the war and have defeated the enemy at every turn. Between battles, we have conscientiously devoted our efforts toward pacification programs which are destined to bring peace, security, and progress to the Central Highlands.

The esprit displayed by the soldiers of the Famous Fighting Fourth Infantry Division is, to my mind, matchless. You are members of a fighting combat division, and you are deserving of every tribute paid you over the past three years. For you have served well and nobly--you have been unwavering in your devotion to the division's motto, STEADFAST AND LOYAL.

As we move toward our fourth year of combat operations, I take this opportunity to salute you. I am confident you will fulfill future missions with the same esprit and professional competence which has characterized our proud Division's past achievements.

DONN R. PEPKE
Major General, USA
Commanding

A salute to the INFANTRY

continued from the front inside cover

"How did you spend your year?"
Humpin' the boonies, that's how. Finding, fixing, and fighting Charlie. Whipped his _____!
You and your buddies, the guys in your outfit. Black, white, Spanish-American or American Indian—Same-same. All for one and one for all. The only way. You teamed up with that colored kid fromPittsburgh and, after he DEROSED, with the white guy from Atlanta.
Remember when Harry took a hit and that medic nearly got killed trying to get to him?
A man's a man. You'll never question that again, even if you did before the war.

You'll never forget their faces, or the kind of guys they were. Most of them were really great.
And some won't be going back.

You'll remember a million other things too.
The incredible dust during the dry season. The relentless monsoon rains that turned the dust to a sucking, gooey mud. You wondered, sometimes, whether you were still in the Highlands, because everything looked just like the pictures you'd seen of the Ninth in the Delta. Whadda hellhole. Sunshine or downpour, dust or mud. No matter what, you stayed miserable.

You'll remember your CIB, too. You earned it. Fighting the nastiest, dirtiest, bitterest war in history. And all the while you were sweating, some college clowns back home were protesting the war. Burning draft cards. It really bugs you; they know so little, but make so much noise. Really burns a guy up some times. Stupid.
You'll remember your officers, too. The Old Man wasn't really so old. He just looked that way after trying to keep a hundred or more of you in line and get you all home in one piece.
An impossible dream.
And the lieutenant. Not much older than you. Or maybe not as old. OK, he made some goofs, maybe some bad ones, and maybe you hated him for a while. But it didn't take long for you to see he was doing his best with a big job, and he took a lot of risks trying to keep track of everything and everybody during those firefights. He was a pretty terrific guy after all, you'll reflect, and you wouldn't have taken his job for a million bucks.

Too bad he didn't make it. He was really Number One.
A year's worth of memories. Enough for a lifetime of reflection. Food for new ideas, new opinions, conversation over a beer. You'll forget some of it, but not much. Bloodstains are nearly permanent.

You did some pretty heroic things, but you don't want to be called a hero. You only want to forget the hell you lived through and return to normal. Pick up where you left off, like nothing happened in between. 'Cause war's no fun, no fun at all. Not like the movies or comics or games you played as a kid. A lousy way to settle anything. But it's a lot better than sitting on your butt while somebody clobbers the hell out of somebody else who can't hit back. Like the women and kids who died in the cities during Tet, or whenever some terrorist felt like chucking a bomb in a restaurant or church or school. Maybe we can't save them all, but we can make Charlie pay so he'll think twice the next time.

That's what it's all about.

It wasn't your war alone. There were a heck of a lot of guys—non-Infantry types—who fought, sweated, and bled there. But never so consistently, so courageously, so decisively as you who wear your CIBs and crossed rifles so proudly.
You were on the perimeter when the sappers hit; you spilled from the first slick into a hot LZ. And in a bunch of other places you'd never wish on anyone.

And now home.
How can a plane ride mean so much?
Thank God.

Contributed by CPT John Grabowski


58